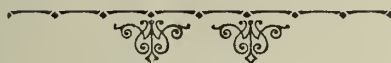


= ILMINSTER =  
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.



*The Annual Report*

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health,

FOR THE

ILMINSTER URBAN DISTRICT,

**For the Year ending Dec. 31st, 1908.**



# MEMBERS OF THE ILMINSTER URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

(FOR 1908.)

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Mr. John Taylor, (*Chairman.*)

„ J. Grabham, (*Vice-Chairman.*)

„ F. T. Adams.

„ R. Coombes.

„ T. B. Edmonds.

„ H. M. Hext.

„ J. R. Paull.

„ A. Poole.

„ S. Rowe.

„ J. F. Sanders.

„ H. H. Shepherd.

„ R. P. Wheadon.

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„ J. Duke, *Solicitor, Clerk.*

„ G. W. Warry, *Surveyor and*  
*Sanitary Inspector.*

Dr. Maidlow, *Medical Officer of Health.*

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present you with the tenth Annual Report of the sanitary condition and vital statistics of your district for the year ending December 31st, 1908.

<b>ESTIMATED POPULATION,</b>	<b>2,287.</b>	} At Census 1901.
<b>NUMBER OF INHABITED HOUSES,</b>	<b>542.</b>	
<b>Average Number of Persons per house</b>	<b>4.20.</b>	
<b>ACRES</b>	<b>529.</b>	

OCCUPATION. A market town, with some shirt and collar manufactories.

GEOLOGY. Except at Winterhay where there is water-borne gravel in the bed of the Ile, Ilminster is mostly connected with the Lias. Upper behind the buildings on N. side of West Street, succeeded by the Middle; and at the foot of the hill the Lower predominates. This soil consists of bands of limestone with intervening strata of clay which throws out the water-springs.

The chief increase of the town is on the pervious Midford Sands of the Oolite, as far as Beacon (Hamlet.)

**\*TABLE I.**

Year.	Population. Estim'd to middle of each year.	Births.		Total Deaths reg. in Dist.				Deaths of residents reg'ted in public Instit'ns beyond the District.	Nett Deaths at all ages belonging to the District.	
		Number.	Rate per 1000 of estimated population.	Under 1 Year.		At all ages.			Number.	Rate per 1000 est. pop'tion.
				Number.	Rate per 1000 births registered.	Number.	Rate per 1000 estim'd population.			
1899	†2282	56	24.5	8	142.8	34	14.8			
1900	2284	54	23.6	5	92.5	31	13.5			
§1901	2287	48	20.9	8	166.6	40	17.4			
1902	2289	48	20.9	6	125.0	29	12.9	1	30	
1903	2291	53	23.1	2	37.7	32	13.9			
1904	2293	52	22.6	4	76.9	22	9.5			
1905	2295	47	20.9	5	106.3	35	10.8			
1906	2297	48	20.8	2	41.6	19	8.2	1	20	
1907	2300	40	17.3	2	50.0	26	11.3	1	27	
1908	†2302	49	21.2	5	102.2	29	12.5			

\*Tables I to V after form required by Local Government Board.

†Year of formation of Ilminster Urban District Council.

‡For method of getting these figures see previous Reports.

§Last Census.

**TABLE II.****Vital Statistics of separate Localities in 1908  
and previous years.**

This is a small district without recognised divisions of known population.

**TABLE III.****(Act of 1889). Cases of Notifiable Diseases.**

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	At all ages.	Under 1	1—5	5—15	15—25	25—65	65 and upw'ds
Erysipelas ..	1						1
Diphtheria ..	2			2			
Scarlet Fever ..	4			4			
<b>Totals</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

**TABLE IV.****Causes of, Ages at, Death during the Year.**

CAUSES OF DEATH.	Deaths in the whole District at subjoined ages.						
	At all ages.	Under 1	1—5	5—15	15—25	25—65	65 and upw'ds
Measles ..	1		1				
Enteritis ..	1		1				
Pulmonary Tuberculosis }	3				1	2	
Other Tuber- culous diseases }	1				1		
Bronchitis ..	2						2
Pneumonia ..	2	1				1	
Asthma ..	1						1
Heart diseases ..	4					2	2
Senile decay ..	4						4
All other causes	10	4	1		1	1	3
<b>All Causes</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>

**TABLE V.**

**Giving the Causes of Death of Children under 1 Year,  
i.e.—the “Infantile Mortality.”**

Prematurity	..	..	1 day.
Convulsions	..	..	1, aged 2 months.
Pneumonia	..	..	1, „ 2 months.
Debility	..	..	1, „ 12 months.
Hydrocephalus	..	..	1, „ 10 months.

Illegitimate births, 4—of these 1 died.

**=a Rate of 102·2 per 1000 births registered,  
calculated from 49 births in an estimated population  
of 2,302.**

**Zymotic Death Rate for “7 chief epidemic diseases”  
=·43 per 1000 population.**

**List of Nuisances Remedied during 1908.**

Refuse on Highway.	Defective Drainage.	Defective Gutters.	Choked Closets.	Lime Washing.	Factory W.C. not satisfactory according to the act.	Filthy Premises.	Pigs kept too near dwellings.	<b>Total</b>
5	5	4	3	5	1	1	1	<b>25</b>

GEO. W. WARRY,  
Sanitary Inspector.

## Vital Statistics.

The 29 deaths were distributed between 15 males and 14 females. The 49 births consisted of 23 males, 26 females. The inhabited houses number 590.

In the presence of the recent L.G.B. order *re* the compulsory notification of Tuberculosis occurring in "poor persons," it is important to note that out of the 298 deaths since 1899 no less than 21 (about 7%) have been from Pulmonary Tuberculosis—a proportion far too high.

## Infectious and Contagious Diseases.

Of those notifiable, one of the *scarlet* fever cases was not contracted in the town, the remaining three had nothing in common and their origin was not traceable; but there is always the probability of the infectious germ lying dormant in somebody's throat, and infected rags or clothing (fomites) which have escaped disinfection in previous cases. For every case of *diphtheria* there are several more unnoticed, but none came to my knowledge. School influence is the most common agency in the spread of diphtheria. Both *diphtheria* and *scarlet* fever, insanitary conditions play only a subsidiary part in their spread. The great insanitary condition which does play an important part is overcrowding. In the case of *scarlet* fever when the inflammable material of the new generation has arisen we shall have another outbreak as in 1901, which has just happened in the case of measles, i.e. there is a tendency to a periodical swell.

Of the non-notifiable diseases, *measles*, *German measles* and *Mumps* have caused us considerable embarrassment. *Mumps* raged throughout January and February. It seemed to follow a line of route from Crewkerne, where it had been very

prevalent. Measles appeared in February and the town was scarcely free until June. It seemed to spread from Tauuton via Ashill. Concurrently with Measles and causing the usual difficulty in diagnosis, there was German measles. The failure to recognise mild cases of all these fevers is sometimes a fault of the part of the parents, and sometimes there is a real difficulty of deciding on the part of the medical attendant. It is these mild cases that help so much in the spread.

The schools were closed for three weeks from May 22nd. By that time most of the children had been affected and no further difficulty was experienced on re-opening.

The great difficulty in Measles is to isolate those ailing, but ignorant of the nature of their disorders, for these infect a second batch. The only reasonable plan seems to me to be that of a six-weeks' closure on the appearance of the first case and to allow none to return except by medical advice. But perhaps this would be more disorganizing to the school than measles itself.

I heard some parental criticism that the schools should have been closed before. Probably they would have been much severer had the closure been ordered for six weeks at the onset.

The L.G.B. has in my opinion very wisely ordered that cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis (consumption), at present only for those in receipt of parish relief, should be notified in the usual manner. A memorandum is to be issued setting forth the appropriate action to be taken under the new powers. My chief anxiety is lest the individual's troubles be increased (from the publicity, etc.,) by these new regulations without advantages decidedly compensating to the community.



There can be no doubt that the consumption incidence and mortality can be very considerably reduced by various measures of this sort. But great care is necessary.

### **Water Supply.**

Compared with 1907 the water supply has not been, under the prevalent conditions, more unsatisfactory than usual. No serious complaints of shortage have been received, yet there is much to be desired : the supplies are apt to vary, the rates in some parts of the town are decidedly high, there is some hardship to the cottagers who have to walk to the neighbouring stock, and the wells are in most cases "shallow" with their well-known risks of contamination. This seems a reasonable time to advocate the formation of a good, sufficient, constant general supply under your control.

### **Dairies and Cow Sheds.**

The dairies and cow sheds have been inspected and have been fairly well kept.

### **Disposal of Refuse.**

The disposal of the town refuse has been satisfactory. No complaints have been received of nuisances at the dépôt. It is understood that the land has changed hands, therefore the disposal of the refuse at the present dépôt will be discontinued. It will be well to bear in mind in future contracts that the dépôt shall be at some distance from houses for the burning of refuse is apt to cause a nuisance at a considerable distance.

My remarks made last year are still applicable.

## **Sewage Farm.**

This farm has been inspected about once a month during the year and on the whole has been managed fairly satisfactorily. The constant changing of the men who manage it is a source of trouble and although some have had a knowledge of water meadows and sewage irrigation others have not, and the result is that each one has had to learn what to do, things to avoid, etc., and naturally this cannot go on without some nuisances arising especially in the back stream. It has been pointed out to the Council's tenant the necessity of keeping the carriers cleaned out and watching for leakages in the back stream, and also the keeping of sewage on the field which has been especially laid out for the purpose.

## **Factories and Workshops.**

There are four factories within the meaning of the Act, 33 workshops and 6 work places. 19 of the houses of the out-workers have been inspected. No written notices have been issued but the oral recommendations have been attended to. The premises seem to be quite satisfactory and there has been no infectious or contagious diseases connected with the factories.

## **Meteorology.**

I am indebted to Mr. Beckwith as usual for these figures.

The total rainfall for 1908 is 24'01 against 32'2 of 1907. March was the wettest month with a fall of 4'17. June was the driest with a fall of '28. The exceptionally mild autumn has not been associated with the presence of any particular disease. Influenza at present is more or less prevalent but mild.

**Miscellaneous.**

The results of the medical inspection of children are, as I expected they would be, far reaching and many deficiencies and needs have been recognised. The difficulty not yet solved is who shall carry out the various recommendations. It involves a consideration of that burning question, the happy medium between haphazard State help and self-reliance on the part of the parents.

The sanitary year has been on the whole uneventful and I feel we may be congratulated on our continual healthiness.

Mr. Warry's aid as usual has been invaluable.

I am, gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

W. H. MAIDLOW, M.D., F.R.C.S.,

*Ilminster,*

*(Medical Officer of Health).*

*January, 1909.*



